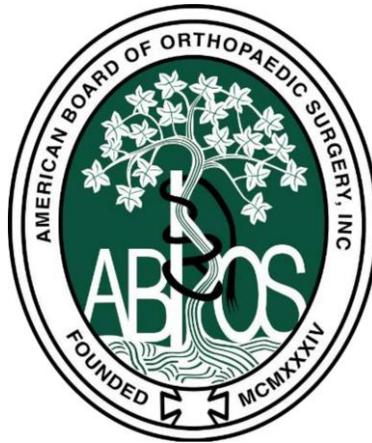


**AMERICAN BOARD  
OF  
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY, INC.**



**Rules and Procedures for the  
Orthopaedic Sports Medicine  
Subspecialty Certification and Recertification  
Examinations**

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**IMPORTANT:** The enclosed Rules and Procedures are specific to initial Subspecialty Certification in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine, and Subspecialty Recertification in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine for Diplomates who only need to recertify their Sports Subspecialty Certification.

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## I.

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Rules and Procedures**

These Rules and Procedures set out the terms and conditions of The American Board of Orthopaedics Surgery's (ABOS) process for subspecialty certification and recertification in orthopaedic sports medicine. The ABOS reserves the right to make changes in its rules and procedures at any time and without prior notice.

#### **Definition**

Orthopaedic Sports Medicine is the special field of medicine that includes the investigation, preservation, and restoration by medical, surgical, and rehabilitative means of all structures of the musculoskeletal system directly affected by participation in athletic activity.

#### **General Information**

The ABOS is not an educational institution, and subspecialty certification in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine is not to be considered a medical degree. Nor does it confer legal privileges or license to practice medicine or the subspecialty of orthopaedic sports medicine. Standards of certification are clearly distinct from those of licensure. The possession of a Subspecialty Certificate in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine from the ABOS does not indicate total qualifications for practice privileges, nor does it imply exclusion of others not so certified. There is no requirement or necessity for a Diplomate of the ABOS to hold a Subspecialty Certificate in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine to be considered qualified to include aspects of sports medicine within the practice of orthopaedic surgery. A Diplomate of the ABOS should be considered qualified to practice in all areas of Orthopaedic Surgery and should not be excluded from subspecialty practice because he or she has chosen not to seek subspecialty certification. The ABOS has never been concerned with measures that might gain privileges or recognition for its Diplomates in the practice of orthopaedic sports medicine or in the practice of orthopaedic surgery. It is neither the intent nor the purpose of the ABOS to define requirements for membership in any organization, staff of any hospital, or who shall or shall not perform orthopaedic sports medicine procedures.

The ABOS intends the Subspecialty Certificate in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine only for those surgeons who have demonstrated qualifications beyond those expected of other orthopaedic surgeons by virtue of additional education, a practice characterized by a significant experience and activity involving the care of patients pursuing athletic activities and performing surgery in orthopaedic sports medicine, and contributions to this field of medicine.

**PLEASE NOTE: A Subspecialty Certificate in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine is valid only when held in conjunction with a current General Orthopaedic Board Certification issued by the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery.**

## II.

### REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION

An applicant for initial subspecialty certification in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine:

- A. Must be a Diplomate of the ABOS and have been in the active practice of orthopaedic sports medicine for at least two years following the completion of orthopaedic education.
- B. Must have a current, full, and unrestricted license to practice medicine in the United States, a United States jurisdiction, or a Canadian province, or be engaged in full-time practice in the United States Federal Government, for which state licensure is not required.
- C. Must demonstrate professional competence and adherence to acceptable ethical and professional standards. The applicant should not publicize him or herself through any medium or form of public communication in an untruthful misleading or deceptive manner. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide documentation that he/she is an ethical and competent practitioner.
- D. May not have had a reduction, restriction, suspension, termination, or resignation at the request of a hospital of all or any portion of an applicant's surgical staff privileges, or pending action to do so, will normally result in a deferral until such action is finally resolved and the applicant's practice has stabilized sufficiently for it to be evaluated.
- E. Will be rendered ineligible for the examination for the Subspecialty Certificate in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine by limitation, suspension, or termination of any right associated with the practice of medicine in any state, province, or country due to violation of a medical practice act or other statute or governmental regulation; by disciplinary action by any medical licensing authority by entering into a consent order; by voluntary surrender while under investigation; or by suspension of licensure.
- F. Must be actively engaged in the practice of orthopaedic sports medicine as indicated by holding full operating privileges in a hospital or surgery center.
- G. **Initial Certification** applicants must have completed one full year of education in an ACGME accredited sports medicine fellowship program or a Canadian Orthopaedic Association accredited sports medicine fellowship program.
- H. **Initial Certification** applicants must submit a patient list of sports medicine operative and non-operative procedures during a consecutive 12-month period that falls within the 24 months preceding the application deadline. Sports Medicine procedures, both operative and non-operative, are those that treat injuries or conditions that are related to or interfere with exercise, sports participation, or a physical lifestyle. The patient list should include all Sports Medicine operative procedures performed during the 12-month collection period

and must include a minimum of 115 operative cases. At least 75 of those must involve arthroscopy as a component of the procedure. Ten additional cases should be included that involve patients who were treated non-operatively.

- I. Applicants must submit the prescribed application form and all the specified supporting documentation and pay the established fees.
- J. Applicants must pass the ABOS's Subspecialty Certificate in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine Examination.
- K. Candidates who cannot fulfill the practice requirements may petition the Credentials Committee of the ABOS for individual consideration. This consideration will take into account contributions and dedication to the discipline of Orthopaedic Sports Medicine such as teaching, publication, administration, sports medicine public service (e.g. team physician), and research. This petition must be submitted in the form of a letter with the application materials.

**The following is a list of examples of cases which can be submitted to meet the minimum of 115 surgical cases and 10 non-surgical cases for INITIAL CERTIFICATION. In addition, there is a list of acceptable CPT codes for the Orthopaedic Sports Medicine Subspecialty**

**Case List available on the ABOS website at**

**[www.abos.org/subspecialties/orthopaedic-sports-medicine/cpt-codes/](http://www.abos.org/subspecialties/orthopaedic-sports-medicine/cpt-codes/)**

**Surgical Cases** (minimum 115 surgical cases are required)

***Lower Extremity***

- a. Hip
  - 1) Ligament (repair/reconstruction)
  - 2) Tendon (repair/reconstruction/debridement)
  - 3) Cartilage (repair/debridement/not arthroplasty)
  - 4) Bone (fractures-intra and extra articular)

- b. Knee

***Tibia-femoral***

- 1) Ligament (repair/reconstruction)
- 2) Tendon (repair/reconstruction/debridement)
- 3) Cartilage
  - a) Meniscus (repair/replacement/debridement)
  - b) Articular cartilage (repair/replacement/debridement/microfracture - not arthroplasty)
- 4) Bone (osteotomies/fractures about the knee)

*The ABOS reserves the right to make changes in its rules and procedures for its examination and certification at any time and without prior notice. These rules and procedures supersede all rules and procedures prior to August 1, 2022*

5) Nerve (decompression/transposition)

*Patello-femoral*

- 1) Ligament (repair/realignment/reconstruction)
- 2) Tendon (repair/reconstruction/debridement)
- 3) Cartilage (repair/replacement/debridement - not arthroplasty)
- 4) Bone (fractures)

c. Foot and Ankle

- 1) Ligament (repair/reconstruction)
- 2) Tendon (repair/reconstruction/debridement)
- 3) Cartilage (repair/replacement/debridement)
- 4) Bone (fractures)
- 5) Nerve (decompression/transposition)

***Upper Extremity***

d Shoulder

*Glenohumeral and scapulothoracic*

- 1) Ligament (repair/reconstruction)
- 2) Tendon (repair/reconstruction/debridement - for example, subacromial decompression)
- 3) Cartilage (debridement/repair/replacement - not arthroplasty)
- 4) Bone (fractures - intra-articular and extra-articular)
- 5) Nerve (decompression/transposition)

*Acromioclavicular and sternoclavicular*

- 1) Ligament (repair/reconstruction)
- 2) Cartilage (debridement)
- 3) Bone (fractures)

e. Elbow

- 1) Ligament (repair/reconstruction)
- 2) Tendon cartilage (repair/reconstruction/debridement)
- 3) Cartilage (debridement)
- 4) Bone (fractures - intra-articular and extra-articular)
- 5) Nerve (decompression/transposition)

f. Wrist and Hand

- 1) Ligament (repair/reconstruction)
- 2) Tendon (repair/reconstruction/debridement)
- 3) Cartilage (debridement)
- 4) Bone (fractures/osteotomies)
- 5) Nerve (decompression/transposition)

**Non-Operative** (Minimum of 10 patients are required required)

These cases must involve evaluation and continuous orthopaedic management (minimum 4 weeks of treatment) of injuries or conditions that are related to or interfere with exercise, sports participation, or a physical lifestyle.

### **III.**

#### **PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATION**

The dates and places for the Orthopaedic Sports Medicine Subspecialty Certification and Recertification Examinations and the deadlines for submission of applications and fees are posted on the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery website ([www.abos.org](http://www.abos.org)). Examinations dates and schedules may be changed at the discretion of the Board.

#### **A. Application**

1. The Sports Medicine Subspecialty Certification and Recertification applications (and Scribe case list collection program for initial sports only) are available online beginning August in the year prior to the year of taking the examination. The deadline to apply is February 1<sup>st</sup> of the examination year.
2. To apply for this examination, go to the ABOS's website at [www.abos.org](http://www.abos.org) and follow the Application Instructions under the Subspecialty Certification, Sports option. Printed applications are not available.
3. No Diplomate will be admitted to the examination until the ABOS has determined that the specified requirements have been met, reviewed all supporting credentials, and been approved.
4. An approved application will be valid for the examination year in which the application was approved. If a candidate is unsuccessful, he/she may repeat the examination by submitting a new application and again receiving approval to sit.

#### **B. Notifying the ABOS of Application Changes**

1. It is the responsibility of all applicants to notify the ABOS office of any change of address, practice association, or hospital/surgery center affiliation.

2. If an applicant changes practice location or practice association or acquires new hospital/surgery affiliations, new references will be requested of the applicant by the ABOS.
3. An applicant is also required to notify the ABOS of the denial of any request for hospital and/or surgery center privileges; of any action to restrict, suspend, or terminate all or any portion of surgical staff privileges; of any request by a hospital to resign all or any portion of surgical staff privileges; and of any action by a governmental agency which would result in the restriction, suspension, or probation of the applicant's license or any right associated with the practice of medicine.

### **C. Requests for Examination Accommodations**

When applying for either part of the certifying examination, a candidate requesting an accommodation in the administration of a certifying examination must submit his or her request on the request form available at [www.abos.org](http://www.abos.org) along with the required documentation of the disability and need for the accommodation, by the application deadline. Documentation of prior accommodations for high stakes examinations should be included.

### **D. Examination**

Applicants who are admitted to take the examination will receive an admission letter which will be posted in their portal on the ABOS website, and will include and a request for the examination fee. The deadline for receipt of the \$1,400 examination fee is May 15 of the examination year. Scheduling permits will be posted in July to those candidates who have been admitted and paid the examination fee.

### **E. Examination Content**

The examination for the Subspecialty Certificate in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine is developed and administered by the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery. This is a multiple-choice, computer-administered examination. The examination contains 175 questions. Beginning in 2019, there will be 175 questions for the initial Subspecialty Certification in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine Examination and 150 questions for the Subspecialty Recertification in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine Examination.

### **F. Rules Governing Admissibility to the Examination**

The ABOS, on the basis of its sole judgment, may grant or deny a candidate the privilege of examination whenever the facts are deemed by the ABOS to so warrant.

### **G. Taking the Orthopaedic Sports Medicine Subspecialty Certification and Recertification Examinations in the Same Examination Administration**

If a Diplomate qualifies for the initial Orthopaedic Sports Medicine certification examination and is eligible to renew a General Orthopaedic Board Certification, the examination may qualify that individual for both an initial subspecialty certificate and general certificate renewal provided certain qualifications are met. These Diplomates should contact the ABOS offices and speak to their Certification Specialist for further information.

*The ABOS reserves the right to make changes in its rules and procedures for its examination and certification at any time and without prior notice. These rules and procedures supersede all rules and procedures prior to August 1, 2022*

## **H. Fee Schedule**

Application Fee - \$450

*(Payable online with application submission by February 1 and non-refundable)*

Deadline - February 1 of the year of the examination

Examination Fee - \$1400

*(Payable online after notification of admission to exam)*

Deadline - May 15 of the year of the examination

A candidate who wishes to withdraw must notify the ABOS office more than ten (10) business days before the scheduled examination to receive a partial refund of \$700. A candidate who fails to appear for an examination or who withdraws without giving more than ten (10) business days' notice as defined above will forfeit the entire fee for examination.

## **IV.**

### **FALSIFIED INFORMATION AND IRREGULAR BEHAVIOR**

- A.** If it is determined that an applicant has falsified information on the application form, case list, or the materials submitted or has failed to provide material information, the applicant's patient list or the materials submitted may be declared ineligible for the examination and the candidate may be required to wait up to three years before being allowed to file a new application.
- B.** Examination applicants should understand that the following may be sufficient cause to bar them from future examinations, to terminate participation in the examination, to invalidate the results of an examination, to withhold or revoke scores or certificates, or to take other appropriate action:
  - 1. The giving or receiving of aid in the examination as evidenced either by observation or by statistical analysis of answers of one or more participants in the examination.
  - 2. The unauthorized possession, reproduction, or disclosure of any materials including but not limited to, examination questions or answers before, during, or after the examination.
  - 3. The offering of any benefit to any agent of the ABOS in return for any right, privilege, or benefit which is not usually granted by the ABOS to other similarly situated candidates or persons.
  - 4. The engaging in irregular behavior in connection with the administration of the examination.
- C.** The following are examples of behavior considered to be irregular and which may be cause for invalidation of the examination or imposition of a penalty:
  - 1. Referring to books, notes, or other devices at any time during the examination. The prohibited material includes written information or information transferred by electronic, acoustical, or other means.

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2. Any transfer of information or signals between candidates during the test. This prohibition includes any transfer of information between the candidate and any other person at any time during the testing period including bathroom breaks.
3. Any appearance of looking at the computer screen of another candidate during the examination.
4. Allowing another candidate to view one's answer during an examination or otherwise assisting another candidate in the examination.
5. Taking any examination material outside of the examination room. All examination materials are the property of the ABOS and must be left in the room at the end of the examination.
6. Candidates should also understand that the ABOS may or may not require a candidate to retake one or more portions of the examination if presented with sufficient evidence that the security of the examination has been compromised, notwithstanding the absence of any evidence of a candidate's personal involvement in such activities.

## V.

### CREDENTIALS DECISIONS

#### **A. Determining Admission to Examinations**

1. The Credentials Committee meets at least once each year to consider applications for the examination. At this meeting, a decision about each applicant will be made either to approve admission to the next examination, to deny admission, to defer decision pending further evaluation or take other appropriate action.
2. A decision approving admission to an examination applies only until the next available examination and does not carry over from one examination until the next. A new application is required for each examination.

#### **B. Deferral of Admission Decision**

A decision about an applicant's admission to the examination may be deferred if information received by the Credentials Committee is insufficient for the Committee to make a judgment and/or warrants further investigation. Typically, the committee will defer such a decision for one year to gain further information. If information is still insufficient, the decision will be deferred for a second year to enable representatives of the ABOS to conduct a site visit. A deferral of not more than two consecutive years is not viewed by the ABOS as an adverse action; thus, no appeal of a decision of the Credentials Committee is permitted unless an applicant has been denied admission or has been deferred for more than two consecutive years.

### **C. Appeal of Admission Decision**

An applicant denied admission to the examination, deferred more than two years, or denied a request for an accommodation in the administration of the examination will be informed of the basis for such action and may request a hearing by an Appeals Committee of the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery. (See Section VII).

## **VI.**

### **CERTIFICATES**

A candidate who has met all the requirements and has passed the examination will receive a Subspecialty Certificate in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine issued by the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery. This certificate will be valid through the expiration date of the candidate's ABOS General Orthopaedic Certificate. Those who hold a time-unlimited General Certificate will have their Subspecialty Certificate be valid for 10 years. A Subspecialty Certificate in Orthopaedic Sports Medicine is valid only when held in conjunction with a current general certificate issued by the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery.

#### **A. Certificate Revocation**

At its discretion, the ABOS may revoke a certificate for due cause, including but not limited to:

1. The Diplomate did not possess the required qualifications and/or meet the requirements for examination, whether or not such deficiency was known to the ABOS or any committee thereof prior to examination or at the time of issuance of the certificate, as the case may be;
2. The Diplomate made an intentional and material misrepresentation or withheld information in the application to the examination or in any other representation to the ABOS or any Committee thereof;
3. The Diplomate made a misrepresentation to the ABOS or any third party as to his or her status as a Diplomate of the ABOS;
4. The Diplomate engaged in irregular behavior in connection with an examination of the ABOS (as described under Section IV. Falsified Information and Irregular Behavior), whether or not such practice had an effect on the performance of the candidate on an examination;
5. The Diplomate was convicted by a court of competent jurisdiction of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude and, in the opinion of the ABOS, having a material relationship to the practice of medicine;

There has been a limitation, suspension, or termination of any right of the Diplomate associated with the practice of medicine in any state, province, or country, including the imposition of any requirement of surveillance, supervision, or review due to a violation of a medical practice act or other statute or governmental regulation, disciplinary action by any medical licensing authority, entry into a consent order, or voluntary surrender of license.

6. A Diplomate may appeal the revocation of his or her certificate pursuant to the Appeals Procedures at [www.abos.org](http://www.abos.org).

## **B. Certificate Reentry**

Should the circumstances that resulted in the revocation, surrender, or expiration of the Diplomate's certificate be corrected, the former Diplomate may petition the Credentials Committee to allow him or her to complete the steps necessary to become certified or recertified. A Diplomate whose certification has expired or been revoked must sit for and pass the Oral Examination unless the Diplomate is not in active surgical practice. If a Diplomate is not in active surgical practice the which case the Diplomate should contact the ABOS Office